

Assembly Concurrent Resolution

No. 118

**Introduced by Assembly Members McCarty, Brown, Burke, Cooper,
Gipson, Holden, Jones-Sawyer, Ridley-Thomas, Thurmond, and
Weber**

January 13, 2016

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 118—Relative to Black History Month.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 118, as introduced, McCarty. Black History Month.

This measure would recognize February 2016 as Black History Month, urge all citizens to join in celebrating the accomplishments of African Americans during Black History Month, and encourage the people of California to recognize the many talents, achievements, and contributions that African Americans make to their communities.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, Dr. Carter Godwin Woodson, distinguished African
2 American author, editor, publisher, and historian, who is known
3 as the “Father of Black History,” founded Negro History Week in
4 1926, which became Black History Month in 1976, intended to
5 encourage further research and publishing regarding the untold
6 stories of African American heritage; and
7 WHEREAS, The history of African Americans here in the
8 United States, as well as throughout the ages, is indeed unique and
9 vibrant, and it is appropriate to celebrate this history during the
10 month of February 2016, which has been proclaimed as Black
11 History Month; and

1 WHEREAS, There is even greater cause for reverent celebration
2 in 2016 as Americans reflect on the significance of the 150th
3 anniversary of the proposal of the Fourteenth Amendment to the
4 United States Constitution, which granted due process and equal
5 protection under the law to all citizens, and at the same time
6 granted citizenship to African Americans; and

7 WHEREAS, The history of the United States is rich with
8 inspirational stories of great men and noble women whose actions,
9 words, and achievements have united Americans and contributed
10 to the success and prosperity of the United States; and

11 WHEREAS, The slave trade was a tragic episode in African
12 history and began before August 1619 when the first slaves arrived
13 in Jamestown, Virginia. During the course of the slave trade, an
14 estimated 50 million African men, women, and children were lost
15 to their native continent, though only about 15 million arrived
16 safely to a new home. The others lost their lives on African soil
17 or along the Guinea coast, or finally in holds on the ships during
18 the dreaded Middle Passage across the Atlantic Ocean; and

19 WHEREAS, The first American to shed blood in the revolution
20 that freed America from British rule was Crispus Attucks (March
21 5, 1770, Boston Massacre), an African American seaman and slave.
22 African Americans also fought in wars including the Battles of
23 Lexington and Concord in April 1775, the Battle of Rhode Island
24 on August 29, 1778, the battles of Ticonderoga, White Plains,
25 Bennington, Brandywine, Saratoga, Savannah, Yorktown, Bunker
26 Hill, and other revolutionary war battles; the War of 1812,
27 including the Battle of New Orleans; the Civil War, the
28 Spanish-American War; World Wars I and II, Korea, and the
29 Vietnam War; and

30 WHEREAS, In spite of the African slave trade, many Africans
31 and African Americans continued to move forward in society;
32 during the Reconstruction period, two African Americans served
33 in the United States Senate and 14 sat in the House of
34 Representatives; and

35 WHEREAS, From the earliest days of the United States, the
36 course of its history has been greatly influenced by Black heroes
37 and pioneers in many diverse areas, from science, medicine,
38 business, and education to government, industry, and social
39 leadership; and

WHEREAS, Africans and African Americans have also been great inventors, inventing and improving things such as the air-conditioning unit, almanac, automatic gearshift, blood plasma bag, clothes dryer, doorknob, doorstop, electric lamp bulb, elevator, fire escape ladder, fountain pen, gas mask, golf tee, horseshoe, lantern, lawnmower, lawn sprinkler, lock, lubricating cup, refrigerating apparatus, spark plug, stethoscope, telephone transmitter, thermostat control, traffic signal, and typewriter; and

WHEREAS, A number of these brave and accomplished individuals, such as Booker T. Washington, George Washington Carver, Matthew Henson, Daniel Hale Williams, Dr. Charles Drew, Jackie Robinson, Jesse Owens, Curt Flood, Medgar Evers, and, of course, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., are noted prominently in the history books of students nationwide, thus enabling them to learn about the important and lasting contributions of these individuals; and

WHEREAS, Among those Americans who have enriched our society are the members of the African American community—individuals who have been steadfast in their commitment to promoting brotherhood, equality, and justice for all; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate thereof concurring, That the Legislature takes great pleasure in recognizing February 2016 as Black History Month, urges all citizens to join in celebrating the accomplishments of African Americans during Black History Month, and encourages the people of California to recognize the many talents, achievements, and contributions that African Americans make to their communities; and be it further

Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.

CORRECTIONS:

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